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Personal Explanation.

SPEECH

OF

HON. R. F. PETTIGREW,
OF SOUTH DAKOTA.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

Friday, June 10, 1898.

Mr. PETTIGREW. Mr. President, a controversy seems to have arisen concerning the political party to which my colleague belongs, and it appears to me that the time has come when the people of South Dakota have a right to know where he stands. It seems to me, owing to the conflicting accounts, the votes which he has cast, and the things which have been said, that the people of South Dakota have a right to be definitely informed regarding the party to which their representative belongs. I have been unable to secure an utterance from my colleague on the subject, and the people of the country and the people of South Dakota have likewise failed to obtain any declaration that would settle this much-mooted question.

The facts are that when he was first elected it was by a combination of Populists and Democrats. When he was last elected it was by a combination of 52 Republicans, 9 so-called Populists, and 4 Democrats. It is well known, also, Mr. President, to the people of South Dakota that he agreed in advance of his election by the Republican party to vote for the tariff bill if necessary, although every vote he had cast during his first six years in the Senate was for free trade—free wool, free barley, and free almost everything. He made a speech in favor of free wool.

Mr. KYLE. Will my colleague please give the facts in regard to that; give his authority for the facts?

Mr. PETTIGREW. Oh, yes; I will accommodate my colleague.

Mr. KYLE. It is about like all the other assertions he will make probably—he has no facts for them at all. I deny in toto the statement he has made.

Mr. PETTIGREW. I will leave the Senate to judge as to the facts and as to whether there is any foundation for the charge I make.

The following is an extract from the speech by Senator KYLE at a ratification meeting held February 18, 1891, taken down in shorthand and published in the Journal of February 19, 1891.

Mr. GALLINGER. From what paper?

Mr. PETTIGREW. The Pierre Journal.

My first leaning toward the Democratic party commenced fifteen years ago, when I became imbued with free-trade doctrines through the instruction of my teacher in political economy. Further study of the economic questions confirmed those views and drew me toward the Democratic party.

This was at a jollification held over his election as a Democrat—and when I found the affairs in our country dominated by a Republican ring, I withdrew from the party and joined the opposition. The platform of the Democratic party is the same as the Independent. They want lower taxes and more money to pay them with, and that is the platform I stand upon.

When my colleague uttered these words he had just been elected by a combination of Populists and Democrats, and had made an agreement to be a free trader and support Cleveland's Administration. In consideration of these pledges he received the Democratic votes. I will now read an interview with my colleague just after his last election, when he was voted for by 52 Republican members of the legislature, 9 Populists, and 4 Democrats.

[Special to the Minneapolis Journal.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 5, 1897.

As was first predicted in Washington dispatches to the Journal, Senator KYLE will support the Republicans in the Senate in all matters pertaining to the tariff. While he admits this, he insists that he has not changed his position regarding the tariff question. In an interview to-day he said:

"I am not in favor of an extreme tariff measure, but with a great deficiency in revenues it is necessary to pass a bill that will supply the Government with sufficient money for its needs.

"So far as I am concerned or the Populist party, we had no particular liking for the Wilson bill, except that feature which provided for an income tax. I believe the new bill should be passed, and I will not oppose its passage. I think the Republicans should have an opportunity to try the methods of relief they suggest, and if they succeed in restoring prosperity no one will be more pleased than I. I believe the Senate will pass a moderate bill and one which I can probably support. I consider the bill which passed the House an extreme measure and feel confident it will be modified in many particulars."

The effect of KYLE's support will practically be to insure the Republicans a quorum of the whole Senate until the tariff bill is finally passed. His talk would indicate, however, that he does not propose to cut loose from his former affiliations, but merely to support the present tariff bill.

And so the last tariff bill received not his vote, because he left the Senate, but he left his pair with a Republican; left it with the person in charge of Republican pairs; left a written pair to be used if necessary, but it was not used, because it was not necessary.

Mr. KYLE. I deny that.

Mr. PETTIGREW. It is not necessary for you to deny it.

Mr. KYLE. Probably the Senator who has charge of the pairs can state the facts.

The VICE-PRESIDENT. The junior Senator from South Dakota is not in order.

Mr. KYLE. I left no such instructions at all.

Mr. PETTIGREW. Senator HANSBROUGH had your pair.

Mr. KYLE. He has no such letter.

Mr. PETTIGREW. Senator HANSBROUGH, who is present, can answer.

It is generally understood in South Dakota that for the purpose of procuring a seat in this body my colleague made a trade with the Republicans, by which they agreed to vote for him and he agreed to support the tariff bill and to support their policy on everything but silver. Here is a resolution pertaining to this phase of the subject passed by 42 or 48 members of the legislature which last elected Mr. KYLE:

Whereas in joint session of the legislature of the State of South Dakota this day assembled, JAMES H. KYLE received 52 Republican votes, 9 Populist votes, and 4 Democratic votes for United States Senator.

And whereas it is reported that said JAMES H. KYLE has made certain pledges that he will vote with the Republican party upon certain Republican party measures: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the undersigned free-silver members of said legislature, That the said JAMES H. KYLE has not been elected by the free-silver mem-

bers of the legislature of South Dakota, and that the free-silver forces of this State are not responsible for his election and we do not consider him a representative of the free-silver cause.

J. S. Stewart, senator, Brule County; F. W. Webb, senator, Brown County; W. S. Major, senator, Hand County; M. E. Hart, senator, Lake County; E. E. King, senator, Hanson County; L. Bothum, senator, Minnehaha County; C. S. Palmer, senator, Minnehaha County; Wm. Bradley, senator, Meade County; J. Sickler, senator, Jerrold County; Rufus Whelaney, senator, Moody County; L. A. Keith, senator, Kingsbury County; Louis N. Ceill, senator, Union County; G. A. Schlund, senator, Davison County; J. P. Buck, senator, Pennington County; U. S. Cook, senator, Aurora County; A. J. Kellar, senator, Fall River County; D. W. Jackson, senator, Miner County; John Colvin, speaker, house of representatives.

George B. Daly, representative, Brown County; L. M. Benson, representative, Brown County; W. E. Kidd, representative, Brown County; Henry Alwes, representative, Minnehaha County; Ole P. Oleson, representative, Yankton County; A. H. Oleson, representative, Lawrence County; Henry Court, representative, Lawrence County; J. Power, representative, Lake County; M. H. Hegdal, representative, Lake County; Moses Moseson, representative, Miner County; S. T. Johnson, representative, Brookings County; Peter Peterson, representative, Brookings County; L. E. Blackstone, representative, Kingsbury County; G. W. Anderson, representative, Kingsbury County; F. G. King, representative, Potter County; Ed Brusseau, representative, Union County; C. W. Deane, representative, Union County; P. H. McManus, representative, Hanson County; Otto Anderson, representative, Pennington County; Zach Holmes, representative, Pennington County; B. F. Wright, representative, Moody County; O. D. Anderson, representative, Aurora County; Irving A. Weeks, representative, Brule County; Ole L. Hanse, representative, Day County; D. G. Bruce, representative, Fall River County; H. S. Mastick, representative, Meade County; B. N. Oliver, representative, Custer County.

The Aberdeen (S. Dak.) Star, published at Mr. KYLE's home, commented as follows upon the foregoing resolution:

It is the duty of the members of the People's Party of this State to openly repudiate Mr. KYLE.

As the facts in the infamous deal which resulted in his reelection to the Senate come to light it appears that KYLE was to pose as a Populist and remain in the People's Party as a disorganizing element. In this way he can be more serviceable to the Republicans than by openly joining their ranks.

There is one way, and one way only, to insure the future of the People's Party in this State, and that is by applying the knife freely to the running sore that is afflicting it. KYLE has long been an obstacle to party progress. His whole influence has been cast on the side of conservatism. He has, so far as his influence counted, smothered every radical movement of the party. His presence has been irritating, and all advance for three years has been made in spite of him and not because of him.

Now that he has openly betrayed the party there should be no hesitation in spewing him out. There is no room for traitors in the party. Let him go over to the party which bought him. And there is no room for Kyle partisans in the People's Party. The ranks must close over the little gap he has left, and we must proceed to business in front of us. But that there shall be no mistake, People's committees should denounce the scamp and define their position. Mr. KYLE has basely betrayed us and can not remain our representative. And this fact should be publicly proclaimed to the people of the State.

A Pierre news telegram says:

PIERRE, March 3, 1898.

On the evening of the day on which KYLE, by Republican votes, was re-elected United States Senator, the free-silver members met and unanimously adopted the resolutions given below. The publication of these was withheld until the adjournment of the legislature, but they are now released, and are given to the public that no one need be deceived as to the standing of the archtraitor in the party of this State.

The resolution was signed by forty-four members of the legislature.

Here is a letter from Mr. Sweet, who was a Republican member of the legislature and refused to become a party to the deal. It is as follows:

Representative Sweet, of Hutchinson, the only Republican who refused to vote for KYLE, is out in a long letter, in which he says, speaking of KYLE: "He has uniformly voted in favor of free silver, in favor of free wool, in favor of free barley, and in favor of every proposition advocated by the ultra-Pop-Democrats of either branch of Congress. I copy from his speech at the ratification held at Pierre, February 18, 1897:

"My first leanings toward the Democratic party commenced fifteen years ago, and when I found the affairs of my country dominated by a Republican ring, I withdrew from the party and joined the opposition. The platform of the Democratic party is the same as the Independent, and is the platform I stand upon."

"These were the words of Senator KYLE six years ago. These words, his Senatorial history, and the Republican denunciation of his course flashed through my mind when I was informed by one of the Republican steering committee about two hours before he was elected last Thursday that he had promised, in case the Republicans would turn in and reelect him, to hereafter vote with the Republicans on all measures except the money question. I abhorred the suggestion. It was too bitter a dish of crow for me to swallow, but I was not struck dumb. I expressed my ideas to the member in classic language and notified him that he need not count me in the deal.

* * * * *

"I do not doubt that he will vote with the Administration on tariff questions for the next six years as honestly as he has voted with the free traders during the past six years. Even for this advantage in the Senate of the United States I can not believe it was good policy to elect him with Republican votes, and do not regret that I did not give him one. If my friends and constituents think that I made a mistake, I must differ with them honestly and crave their indulgence, and earnestly request them to send a better and more pliable man next time to represent them at the State capital.

"E. T. SWEET.

"PIERRE, February 22, 1897."

Now, the facts in the matter are these: Right after the election of 1896 the leading Republican papers of the State advocated the election of Mr. KYLE. Their representatives visited the Republican national committee, visited those members of the national committee who had this matter in charge, and during November and December, before the legislature met, we well knew there was an understanding by which Mr. KYLE was to be elected to the Senate by Republicans, and that he was to stand by the Administration when needed. These representatives of the Republican party, the national committeemen and others, as I said before, visited their national committee, or members of the national committee, and arranged a complete understanding.

These facts are well known in the State. There is no possible doubt about it in the minds of anybody. Mr. Pickler was the Republican nominee for the Senate. He was urged to withdraw. While the national committee did not directly ask that he should withdraw in favor of Mr. KYLE, it is significant that at the time the national committee wrote their letter asking Mr. Pickler to withdraw, the men whom Pickler was told to consult, Mr. Kittridge, who was the national Republican committeeman, and Mr. Elliott, chairman of the Republican State central committee, were openly working for Mr. KYLE. They published interviews urging KYLE's election. In this connection the following letter from Henry Payne is quite pertinent:

[Republican national committee—Chicago headquarters—M. A. Hanna, chairman, Henry C. Payne, Charles G. Dawes, W. T. Durbin, Cyrus Leland, Edwin F. Brown, subtreasurer.]

MILWAUKEE, WIS., February 8, 1897.

MY DEAR SIR: I have yours of the 14th instant, which I have carefully read. The national committee will do anything proper to aid in your election, or in the election of any good Republican from South Dakota, or the election of any other person who would act with the Administration on the tariff ques-

tion; but we look to Mr. Elliott, the chairman of your State committee, and to Mr. Kittredge, member of the national committee from South Dakota, to point the way wherein we can exercise our influence.

These two men, Mr. Kittredge and Mr. Elliott, were publicly urging the election of Mr. KYLE. The Republican papers were all urging it and publishing articles about it constantly. This letter is dated February 8. They had then been at work for two or three months urging the election of Mr. KYLE.

Continuing, the letter to Mr. Pickler from the Republican committee says:

We have been advised that it will be impossible to secure your election; that the fight between the factions of the Populists and Democrats is so intense that there might be a chance to elect some Republican who has not been quite so conspicuous in the party as you have.

Recalling our conversation and what you say in your letter, I have no doubt you will be ready to withdraw your name in case the steering committee advise you to do so.

Referring to the same steering committee that went to Mr. Sweet and told him what the deal was. He refused to be a party to it and refused to vote for Mr. KYLE. The letter to Mr. Pickler concludes:

We have felt that any active interference by the national committee would be resented by the local Republicans. You may be sure that we are intensely anxious regarding the result; so much depends upon getting an Administration Senator from your State. It probably means the control or loss of control of the United States Senate.

We shall appreciate the sacrifice made by you if you should withdraw, and can only urge that you take this course for the reason that it would seem to have been demonstrated that your election is impossible.

I would gladly go to Pierre, but am quite sure that it would do more harm than good.

Very truly, yours,

H. C. PAYNE.

Hon. J. A. PICKLER, *Pierre, S. Dak.*

I came into possession of this letter in a way that authorizes me to use it, and I feel that the country has a right to know and the people of South Dakota have a right to know the facts. If there has been a transaction through which support for a certain measure has been purchased with an office, and the goods have been delivered, you might as well stand up and admit it, and not dodge around it with misleading subterfuges and equivocating expressions.

I could read extracts from the leading papers of the State of South Dakota—the *Ruralist*, and the *Star*, and various other papers—in which they comment on this transaction, but the drift is all the same. There is scarcely a Populist paper in the State that did not at the time consider the transaction as a corrupt bargain and sale.

Mr. President, the shame and disgrace of this transaction is keenly felt by the people of South Dakota. Without regard to political affiliations, all respectable people in the State repudiate the corrupt transaction, and they also repudiate my colleague. I do not believe he could get an audience on any subject in any town in the State. He is despised by all the People's Party and by most Democrats, while the respectable portion of the Republican party hold him in supreme contempt.

Mr. KYLE. Mr. President, the Senator has very correctly stated my training as regards economic views. I was brought up a Republican, and during all the years of my career as a Republican I held to the doctrines of low tariff and bimetallicism. I stand there to-day. Everybody in the Senate, everybody in my State, knows just where I have stood in the past and where I stand now.

I supported the Wilson tariff act of 1894. That was by no means a free-trade measure, but a very high protective tariff bill. I voted for it because I thought it was better than the McKinley tariff act. I think so yet. I so expressed myself in the Senate at that time.

So far as free trade is concerned, it is a theory, and never as an actuality has it been practiced in any government that pretends to raise revenue. The only question is where the tariff shall be placed. Some people think upon one article and some upon another. That is all there is of it. My bimetallic views are likewise known to everybody here.

So far as any corrupt trade is concerned, I merely wish to refer to it. It is a falsehood, malicious, intentionally malicious, from beginning to end. The members of the national committee, probably some of them are upon the floor, understood from the months of the steering committee in Pierre last winter everything that was done, and what I said before and in the papers I say here in the presence of this body. Not one single thing was done that could not come out here in open light of day and to the full knowledge of the Senate.

The reason for the step taken by the Republican party in the Senatorial contest was because they felt that a radical Populist would come to the United States Senate instead of myself, and they preferred to vote for me because of my conservative course during the past six years and because I made my campaign for reelection on an antisocialistic platform.

As regards the passage of the late tariff bill, I stated my position to my colleague from Nebraska, Senator ALLEN, two or three months before I went back to the Senatorial contest, and he understands it well. I published in the press at Minneapolis at the time—November, 1896, after the Presidential election—a statement that, under all the circumstances, the three branches of the United States Government should be in the hands of one party. The Executive was Republican, the House was Republican, and the Senate should be the same for the good of the country. Also the Senator from Nebraska and others of us agreed at that time to remain silent when a new tariff act should come up for passage, preferring not to obstruct, and thus give the party in power every opportunity to bring prosperity to the country.

Everybody knew my position. The people of my State knew that I would not obstruct the tariff. Our votes were not considered a necessity. The same is true in regard to the revenue measure. Everybody knows these things, and the question was never asked whether or not I would vote for these propositions.

I wish to state now that the malicious attacks to which my colleague refers, from the South Dakota Ruralist, the Star, and similar papers in my State, are from the pen and brains of socialists stinging under defeat, and whom our people will never intrust with the responsibility of State affairs. Some of these papers have already gone to their doom, and the rest will follow. They ought not to receive consideration from respectable citizens of our State. I shall not take time to reply to these things now, but I shall hope to hereafter. It is now late in the evening, but I wish to add in closing that this whole thing, the statements of my colleague, are malicious fabrications from beginning to end, and the man who asserts them is as corrupt and mendacious as the charges he makes.

Mr. PETTIGREW. Mr. President, the rather remarkable

speech just delivered by my colleague shows such lack of moral perception, such want of principle, that I am forced to the conclusion that his opinions and convictions have been so long subjected to barter and sale that he can not appreciate or comprehend the enormity of his acts. Mr. KYLE made the campaign of 1896 as a Populist, stumping the State for Bryan and advocating throughout every principle of the Populistic party. He solicited money to make his campaign for the Senate from the Democratic Congressional campaign committee and received large sums. While the legislature was in session reports of his disgraceful trade reached the senate and Mr. KYLE was asked by wire if the reports were true.

He denounced all such stories as false. He makes the same defense now, but his worthless word will have no weight against a mass of evidence so conclusive of his perfidy.

The following editorial from the Aberdeen Star, KYLE's home Populist paper, will throw some light on this subject:

Although KYLE publicly denies that he has any understanding with the Republicans, the latter generally believe the story which is current that he has committed himself to support all Republican measures with the exception of free silver. Your correspondent was informed to-night by a Republican who has been working on the combination that the interview which resulted in the agreement took place this morning. There were present KYLE, Pickler, one of KYLE's managers, and two of the Republican steering committee. The interview was protracted, and during it the whole ground was covered.

KYLE agreed to vote with the Republicans—to vote for the tariff measure and every Republican measure. He reserved the right to vote upon the silver question as he saw fit, but qualified this reservation by explaining that since the last election he thought that a measure for the free and unlimited coinage of silver alone would not probably come to a vote in Congress, and should it come up he would not vote for it if it were in such shape as to imperil the passage of any other Administration measure. The talk was so explicit and the understanding so perfect that the Republican members of the legislature were readily induced to agree to the arrangement. No caucus was held, but the committee saw the members separately, and the whole affair was managed so quietly that nothing leaked out till the whole business was arranged. One Republican—Sweet, of Hutchinson—refused to go into the deal.

Here is another newspaper account of the conspiracy:

On Monday last, 15th instant, the Populists caucused and adjourned to meet last Thursday night. In the meantime they had agreed upon a caucus nominee. This decision soon reached the ears of the Republicans, who at once began to rally to meet the emergency. Major Pickler had reached the conclusion that it would be impossible to elect a pronounced Republican and gracefully withdrew from the contest and went to work with the Republicans.

It was soon ascertained that KYLE could muster 13 votes that could be counted on from start to finish, and the greatest political maneuver that was ever successfully carried out in the State began. It was no easy work to convince some of the Republican members that the time had come to act, and that there was no time to spare, and the work was not completed until 7 o'clock in the morning, Thursday. In hallways of the Locke Hotel Republicans were flitting about in their night robes, while the silver forces slept in adjoining rooms unsuspectingly.

Mr. BUTLER. Will the Senator from South Dakota yield to me one moment?

Mr. PETTIGREW. I yield.

Mr. BUTLER. The Senator said he was not able yet to place his colleague. His colleague stated that he thought the Senate ought to be Republican, inasmuch as the President was Republican and the House was Republican, and, of course, therefore, he had to make himself a Republican to make that majority. Therefore, let it be understood from now on that the Senate is Republican and by the admission of the Senator whose vote is necessary to make it Republican.

Mr. PETTIGREW. I will say in this connection that my colleague on the 30th of December, 1895, made a statement to that effect, and I think we can safely class him as a man without conviction or character—a Republican, for revenue only.

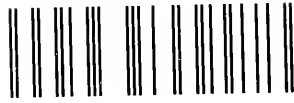
The proposition that a member of the United States Senate finds it his duty to abandon his party and ally himself with the opposition party for the purpose of giving his political opponents entire control of the Government is one never before enunciated since political organizations divided the sentiments of a self-governing people. The public servant who is conscientiously ready to swap political conviction for governmental symmetry can not be far in advance of the heavenly announcement that is to usher in the millennium.

This would certainly be the case in the absence of controlling circumstances, but the coincidence of an election by Republican votes and an anxiety for the political welfare of a Republican Administration tends to rudely dissolve the illusion Mr. KYLE seeks to establish on the basis of an abnormal conscience. We of South Dakota have known him in all his varied phases, and he will never be able to square himself with the public through the creation of flimsy pretexts in excuse for oft-repeated political apostasy.

He has now abandoned every position held by the People's Party, and within two weeks has voted against taxing corporations, against an income tax, against issuing greenbacks or money direct by the Government, against postal savings banks, in favor of the issue of bonds, and against amending the Washington street-car charters so as to limit the length of the franchise.

As a reward for all this treachery and betrayal of principle, he basks in the smiles of the Republican Administration, and receives his pay in appointments for his friends. These favors he unblushingly solicits as the consideration for his votes.

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